

# HOUSE BILL No. 4123

February 1, 2005, Introduced by Reps. Clack, Gillard, Brown, Anderson, Meisner, Waters, Zelenko, Vagnozzi, Byrnes, Murphy, Lipsey, Gonzales, Plakas, Kathleen Law, Alma Smith, Sak, Donigan, Williams, Hune, Nofs, Gleason, Condino, Moolenaar and Walker and referred to the Committee on Family and Children Services.

A bill to establish the foster care independence program; to provide certain services for certain youth in foster care due to child abuse or child neglect; and to prescribe the duties of certain state departments.

## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1       Sec. 1. (1) This act shall be known and may be cited as the  
2 "foster care independence act".

3       (2) A young adult is eligible for services under this act if  
4 he or she is or has been in a foster care placement through the  
5 state of Michigan based on child abuse or child neglect on or after  
6 his or her fourteenth birthday.

7       (3) A young adult is not eligible for services under this act  
8 if 1 or more of the following apply:

1 (a) The young adult is in an out-of-home placement solely as  
2 an adjudicated delinquent. If the young adult is currently an  
3 adjudicated delinquent but met the eligibility criteria before his  
4 or her adjudication, services may be provided under this act after  
5 the delinquency case is closed.

6 (b) The young adult was never in an out-of-home placement  
7 based on child abuse or child neglect.

8 (c) The young adult is in a detention facility or other state-  
9 operated facility.

10 (4) Services under this act shall be provided to eligible  
11 young adults 14 years of age and older regardless of the permanency  
12 planning goal. Services under this act shall be available to all  
13 eligible young adults after case closure through 20 years of age.  
14 Services under this act shall be provided on an "as-needed" basis.

15 Sec. 2. As used in this act:

16 (a) "Adjudicated delinquent" means an individual found to have  
17 committed an offense that, if committed by an adult, would be a  
18 criminal offense.

19 (b) "Child abuse" and "child neglect" mean those terms as  
20 defined in section 2 of the child protection law, 1975 PA 238, MCL  
21 722.622.

22 (c) "Department" means the department of human services.

23 (d) "Foster care" means 24-hour substitute care for children  
24 placed away from their parents or guardians for whom the state  
25 agency has placement and care responsibility. Foster care placement  
26 includes, but is not limited to, placement in foster family homes,  
27 child care institutions, and preadoptive placements.

1 (e) "Young adult" means an individual 14 years of age or older  
2 but less than 21 years of age.

3 Sec. 3. (1) The department shall establish the foster care  
4 independence program to offer education, training, employment, and  
5 financial support for young adults leaving foster care.

6 (2) It is the intent of the legislature to create a program to  
7 do all of the following:

8 (a) Identify young adults who are likely to remain in foster  
9 care until 18 years of age and help these children make the  
10 transition to self-sufficiency by providing services such as  
11 assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career exploration,  
12 vocational training, job placement and retention, training in daily  
13 living skills, training in budgeting and financial management  
14 skills, substance abuse prevention, and preventive health  
15 activities, including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and  
16 pregnancy prevention.

17 (b) Help young adults who are likely to remain in foster care  
18 until 18 years of age receive education, training, and services  
19 necessary to obtain employment.

20 (c) Help young adults who are likely to remain in foster care  
21 until 18 years of age prepare for and enter postsecondary training  
22 and education institutions.

23 (d) Provide personal and emotional support to children aging  
24 out of foster care, through mentors and the promotion of  
25 interactions with dedicated adults.

26 (e) Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment,  
27 education, and other appropriate support and services to former

1 foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement  
2 their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that  
3 program participants recognize and accept their personal  
4 responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition  
5 from adolescence to adulthood.

6 Sec. 4. (1) The department shall provide at least all of the  
7 following goods and services to eligible young adults in the foster  
8 care independence program:

9 (a) Services that are not available from other funding sources  
10 or agencies for eligible young adults currently in the foster care  
11 system and for young adults released from foster care before  
12 reaching 21 years of age.

13 (b) Educational support.

14 (c) Classes or groups on interpersonal communication and  
15 building and maintaining relationships and classes or groups on  
16 independent living skills.

17 (d) Stipends to cover the cost of utility deposits, security  
18 deposits, and first month's rent to eligible young adults who are  
19 leaving foster care or have left foster care because they have  
20 reached 18 years of age but have not reached 21 years of age. The  
21 first month's rent and damage deposit may only be provided to young  
22 adults 18 to 21 years of age who are leaving foster care or who  
23 have left foster care because they attained 18 or 19 years of age  
24 and have not reached 21 years of age.

25 (2) The department shall make known a list of goods and  
26 services provided under the program established in this act.

27 Sec. 5. The department may provide goods and services allowed

- 1 under federal law and any other goods and services the department
- 2 considers appropriate.